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DRAFTED BY OSD/ISA:LTC.WILLIAMS

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

OSD - MR. CLEMENTS

DOD/ISA - E.V. MCAULIFFE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

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FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARMS PURCHASES

REF: JIDDA 5353

1. REFTEL REQUESTED BACKGROUND ON ALLEGED STATEMENT BY
DEPSECDEF CLEMENTS ON SUBJECT OF SAUDI DESIRES TO PURCHASE
F-14 AND F-15 AIRCRAFT. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, FOLLOWING IS
TEXT OF MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD ON MR. CLEMENTS' INTERVIEW
WITH JOHN FINNEY, NEW YORK TIMES, 1 JULY 1976:

2. QUOTE. MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD. SUBJECT: MR.
CLEMENTS' INTERVIEW WITH JOHN FINNEY, NEW YORK TIMES, 1 JULY
1976, 1640 HOURS.

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MR. CLEMENTS INITIATED THE DISCUSSION BY REFERRING TO THE

FOREIGN MILITARY SALES ARTICLE THAT JOHN FINNEY WROTE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES WHICH DESCRIBED THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES BREAKFAST AS A PEP MEETING. MR. CLEMENTS EXPLAINED THAT IN FACT IT WAS NOT A PEP MEETING, BUT RATHER AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE ALL OF THE FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PRINCIPALS TO SUPPORT THE DOD REQUIREMENTS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREIGN MILITARY SALES (FMS) PROGRAMS ONCE DECISIONS ON THE POLICY HAVE BEEN RENDERED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT. MR.

CLEMENTS EMPHASIZED THAT THE DOD ROLE IN FMS IS TOTALLY ONE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND IN SOME CASES THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL DETERMINE THE POLICY. MR. CLEMENTS THEN DESCRIBED HOW AN FMS CASE IS DEVELOPED, FROM INITIATION BY THE AMBASSADOR IN-COUNTRY TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE DOD. HE EXPLAINED HOW DOD, STATE AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL INTERACT TO SUPPORT FMS REQUIREMENTS. MR. CLEMENTS INDICATED TO MR. FINNEY THAT HE HAD EXPLAINED THIS ENTIRE FMS INTERACTION TO THE NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL BOARD DURING A RECENT VISIT TO NEW YORK. MR. CLEMENTS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT THE CONGRESS HAS A ROLE IN APPROVING ON FMS CASES IN EXCESS OF DOLS 25 MILLION.

IN HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE DOD MISSION REGARDING FMS, MR. CLEMENTS POINTED OUT THAT DOD HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO ASSURE THAT COUNTRIES ARE PREPARED AND CAPABLE OF ABSORBING HIGH TECHNOLOGY FMS EQUIPMENT. MORE SPECIFICALLY, HE EXPLAINED THAT THE DOD MUST ADVISE CUSTOMER COUNTRIES ON APPROPRIATENESS OF PURCHASING CERTAIN TYPES OF EQUIPMENT THAT THEY MAY NOT BE PREPARED TO ABSORB. TO ILLUSTRATE THIS POINT, MR. CLEMENTS SAID THE DOD HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO MODERATE THE FLOW OF CERTAIN ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA. HE POINTED OUT THAT SAUDI ARABIA "HAS A TRAINED PEOPLE PROBLEM." AND, THEY CANNOT ABSORB FMS EQUIPMENT AS QUICKLY AS THEY WOULD LIKE TO. MR. FINNEY ASKED THE QUESTION, "NOW THE SAUDIS WANT TO BUY THE F-14 AND/OR THE F-15, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THAT?"

MR. CLEMENTS: WE ARE CURRENTLY TRYING TO DISCOURAGE THE SALE OF THOSE SOPHISTICATED AIRCRAFT. I DON'T THINK SAUDI LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARABIA WILL BE READY FOR SUCH SYSTEMS UNTIL ABOUT 1985. WE ARE TRYING TO DISCOURAGE THE SAUDIS FROM BUYING THE F-14 AND/OR THE F-15 IMMEDIATELY. WE WANT THEM "THE SAUDIS" TO ACCEPT THESE SYSTEMS IN AN ORDERLY FASHION AND WE ARE TRYING TO DISCOURAGE THEM FROM MOVING TOO QUICKLY, BUT THE FINAL DECISION IS THEIRS.

MR. FINNEY: AREN'T WE STILL KEEPING TECHNICAL REPRESENTA-

TIVES IN SAUDI ARABIA FOR THE IMPROVED HAWK?

MR. CLEMENTS: YES, WE ARE AND THIS GOES BACK TO MY POINT, THAT THEY ARE NOT READY TO SUPPORT HIGH TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS WHEN THEY FLOW INTO COUNTRY TOO RAPIDLY.

MR. FINNEY: MADE THE POINT THAT THE MAAGS OPERATE MUCH LIKE CAR SALESMEN IN COUNTRY.

MR. CLEMENTS SAID THAT IS COMPLETELY UNTRUE AND HE RE-

EXPLAINED HOW THE MAAGS INTERACT WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT ONCE A DECISION ON AN FMS CASE HAS BEEN MADE.

MR. FINNEY: I KNOW THAT CONGRESS IS DIRECTING A REDUCTION IN THE MAAGS. WHAT ARE YOU COMING DOWN TO IN TERMS OF YOUR MAAG STRENGTHS? HOW MANY MAAGS ARE THERE NOW AND HOW MANY WILL THERE BE AND WHAT WILL BE THE FINAL MAAG POPULATION?

"MR. CLEMENTS TOLD COL. FELTER TO GET THE DETAILS ON MAAG REDUCTIONS AND PROVIDE THEM TO MR. FINNEY. THIS WAS ACCOMPLISHED THAT EVENING."

MR. FINNEY: WELL ONCE THE MAAGS GO WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR MILITARY CONTACTS IN-COUNTRY?

MR. CLEMENTS: WELL WE COULD GO TO A TAFT (TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FIELD TEAM) FOR SPECIFIC PROGRAMS. AND, OF COURSE, THE HOST COUNTRY WILL PROVIDE THE FUNDS TO PAY FOR THE TAFT TEAMS AS PART OF THE FMS PACKAGE.

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THAT ENDED THE DISCUSSION ON FMS AND SAUDI ARABIA AND THE INTERVIEW TURNED TO SHIPBUILDING. SIGNED JOSEPH H. FELTER, LTC, USA, MILITARY ASSISTANT TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE. END QUOTE.

3. THE FINNEY ARTICLE, AS IT APPEARED IN THE 8 JULY 1976 NEW YORK TIMES, QUOTED DEPSECDEF CLEMENTS INCORRECTLY AND OUT OF CONTEXT. MR. CLEMENTS AGREED TO THE INTERVIEW ON WHICH THE ARTICLE WAS BASED FOR THE PURPOSE OF EXPLAINING THE OVERALL FMS PROGRAM, AND REFERENCES TO SAUDI ARABIA WERE INCLUDED ONLY AS AN EXAMPLE TO SHOW THAT THE USG DOES NOT PUSH ARMS SALES ON ANY COUNTRY. HABIB

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